

Amendments to the Claims

No claims have been amended or cancelled in this response; however, a listing of the pending claims follows for the convenience of the Examiner.

1-2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) A finish on a hollow plastic preform or container having an integral body, said finish including:

a neck integrally molded with said body, said neck being circumferentially expanded subsequent to molding and being at least partially crystallized subsequent to expansion to form an expanded and crystallized neck, and

a finish ring externally secured to said expanded and crystallized neck, said finish ring having at least one external thread or bead for securement of a closure.

4. (Original) The finish set forth in claim 3 wherein said finish ring is externally secured to said neck by interference fit, adhesive or welding.

5. (Original) The finish set forth in claim 3 wherein said finish ring is of a different plastic material construction from said neck.

6. (Original) A method of making a finish on a hollow plastic preform or container, which includes the steps of:

(a) providing a molded plastic neck that is at least partially of crystallizable polymer construction,

(b) circumferentially expanding said neck,

(c) at least partially crystallizing said neck after expansion in said step (b),
and

(d) securing a finish ring externally over said neck subsequent to said step (c).

7. (Original) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein said finish ring is externally secured to said neck by interference fit, adhesive or welding.

8. (Original) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein said plastic finish ring is of a different material construction from said neck.

9. (Original) A method of making a plastic container having a body and a finish with at least one external thread, which includes the steps of:

- (a) providing a plastic preform having a body and a neck,
- (b) blow molding said body of said preform to form the body of the container,
- (c) either prior to or subsequent to said step (b), expanding said preform neck,
- (d) at least partially crystallizing said neck subsequent to said step (c),
- (e) providing a plastic finish ring having at least one external thread, and
- (f) securing said finish ring to an external surface of said neck after expansion of said neck in said step (c), and either prior to or subsequent to said step (b).

10. (Original) A method of making a preform assembly for blow molding a container, which includes the steps of:

- (a) providing a molded plastic preform having a body and a cylindrical neck with an external surface,
- (b) expanding said preform neck,
- (c) at least partially crystallizing said neck subsequent to said step (b),
- (d) providing a molded plastic finish ring, and
- (e) securing said finish ring to the external surface of the preform neck after expansion in said step (b) and crystallization in said step (c).

11. (Previously Presented) The finish set forth in claim 3 wherein said expanded neck is at least partially molecularly oriented.

12. (Previously Presented) The finish set forth in claim 3 wherein said neck is at least partially of a crystallizable polymer.
13. (Previously Presented) The finish set forth in claim 12 wherein said crystallizable polymer comprises one or more of polyester, PET, polyolefin, polyethylene, polypropylene, polycarbonate, polyamide, and nylon.
14. (Previously Presented) The finish set forth in claim 3 wherein said preform or container is a multilayer preform or container including one or more of a barrier material, regrind, and post-consumer resin.
15. (Previously Presented) The finish set forth in claim 3 wherein said finish ring has one or more external threads or thread segments.
16. (Previously Presented) The finish set forth in claim 3 wherein said finish is on an injection molded or compression molded preform.
17. (Previously Presented) The finish set forth in claim 3 wherein said finish ring is of injection or compression molded plastic construction.
18. (Previously Presented) The finish set forth in claim 3, wherein said finish ring comprises one or more of polyester, PET, post-consumer resin, process regrind, polypropylene, polyethylene, and polyethylene naphthalate.
19. (Previously Presented) The finish set forth in claim 3 wherein the finish ring is wholly or partially crystallized.
20. (Previously Presented) The finish set forth in claim 3 wherein the crystallized neck comprises one or more of: crystallization entirely through a radial thickness of the neck, crystallization concentrated on an internal and/or external surface of the neck,

crystallization entirely through an axial length of the neck, crystallization concentrated in selected axial areas of the neck, and graded or non-graded crystallization.

21. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein said expanded neck is at least partially molecularly oriented during said expanding step.
22. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein said neck is at least partially of a crystallizable polymer.
23. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 22 wherein said crystallizable polymer comprises one or more of polyester, PET, polyolefin, polyethylene, polypropylene, polycarbonate, polyamide, and nylon.
24. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein said preform or container is a multilayer preform or container including one or more of a barrier material, regrind, and post-consumer resin.
25. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein said finish ring has one or more external threads or thread segments.
26. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein said finish is on a blow-molded container made from an injection molded or compression molded preform.
27. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein said finish ring is of injection or compression molded plastic construction.
28. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein said finish ring comprises one or more of polyester, PET, post-consumer resin, process regrind, polypropylene, polyethylene, and polyethylene naphthalate.

29. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein the finish ring is wholly or partially crystallized.

30. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 6 wherein the crystallized neck comprises one or more of: crystallization entirely through a radial thickness of the neck, crystallization concentrated on an internal and/or external surface of the neck, crystallization entirely through an axial length of the neck, crystallization concentrated in selected axial areas of the neck, and graded or non-graded crystallization.

31. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 9 wherein said expanded neck is at least partially molecularly oriented during said expanding step.

32. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 9 wherein said neck is at least partially of a crystallizable polymer.

33. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 32 wherein said crystallizable polymer comprises one or more of polyester, PET, polyolefin, polyethylene, polypropylene, polycarbonate, polyamide, and nylon.

34. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 9 wherein said container is a multilayer container including one or more of a barrier material, regrind, and post-consumer resin.

35. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 9 wherein said finish ring has one or more external threads or thread segments.

36. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 9 wherein said finish is on an injection molded or compression molded preform.

37. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 9 wherein said finish ring is of injection or compression molded plastic construction.

38. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 9, wherein said finish ring comprises one or more of polyester, PET, post-consumer resin, process regrind, polypropylene, polyethylene, and polyethylene naphthalate.

39. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 9 wherein the finish ring is wholly or partially crystallized.

40. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 9 wherein the crystallized neck comprises one or more of: crystallization entirely through a radial thickness of the neck, crystallization concentrated on an internal and/or external surface of the neck, crystallization entirely through an axial length of the neck, crystallization concentrated in selected axial areas of the neck, and graded or non-graded crystallization.

41. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 10 wherein said expanded neck is at least partially molecularly oriented during said expanding step.

42. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 10 wherein said neck is at least partially of a crystallizable polymer.

43. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 42 wherein said crystallizable polymer comprises one or more of polyester, PET, polyolefin, polyethylene, polypropylene, polycarbonate, polyamide, and nylon.

44. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 10 wherein said preform is a multilayer preform including one or more of a barrier material, regrind, and post-consumer resin.

45. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 10 wherein said finish ring has one or more external threads or thread segments.

46. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 10 wherein said finish is on an injection molded or compression molded preform.

47. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 10 wherein said finish ring is of injection or compression molded plastic construction.

48. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 10 wherein said finish ring comprises one or more of polyester, PET, post-consumer resin, process regrind, polypropylene, polyethylene, and polyethylene naphthalate.

49. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 10 wherein the finish ring is wholly or partially crystallized.

50. (Previously Presented) The method set forth in claim 10 wherein the crystallized neck comprises one or more of: crystallization entirely through a radial thickness of the neck, crystallization concentrated on an internal and/or external surface of the neck, crystallization entirely through an axial length of the neck, crystallization concentrated in selected axial areas of the neck, and graded or non-graded crystallization.